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ABSTRACT

This report develops proposals for improving teacher attendance, reducing expenditures for the use of substitute teachers, and for developing alternatives to hiring substitute teachers in New York City. The study was undertaken in order to find ways to reduce the magnitude of substitute teacher costs. The report identifies the types and rates of absence and documents the present absence approval and reporting system and teacher assignment policies. Major findings include: no apparent relationship between a teacher's rate of absence and his performance rating, the rate of discretionary absence is generally twice as high as the rate for illnesses requiring a medical certificate, teacher discretionary absence rates are approximately 21 percent higher for Mondays and Fridays than for other school days, discretionary absence rates are 29 percent higher in Title I elementary schools than in other elementary schools, and those schools with a higher percentage of teachers with more than five years service show a higher absence rate from illnesses requiring medical certificates. (Author/DN)

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STATE OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REVIEW

TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN NEW YORK CITY and the Cost-Effectiveness of Substitute Teachers

January 1974

EA 005 751

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SUMMARY

The cost of substitute teachers in the 1971-72 school year for New York City was $71.5 million.* Because of the magnitude of these costs, the Office of Education Performance Review has undertaken an examination of teacher absenteeism in New York City to:

-- identify types and rates of absence;
-- review costs of hiring substitute teachers;
-- recommend approaches to reduce absenteeism;
-- investigate alternatives to hiring substitute teachers.

Findings:

In general, there is no effective central or district effort to provide the direction and information necessary to control teacher absenteeism in New York City. Absenteeism rates vary significantly throughout the City by type of absence and day of the week.

-- There is no apparent relationship between a teacher's rate of absence and his performance rating.
-- Central absence reports prepared by the City Board of Education are not promptly provided to school districts for review, comparison and corrective action.
-- The rate of discretionary absence is generally twice

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* Source: State Education Department, Bureau of Statistical Services. The New York City Board of Education has reported the costs of substitute teachers, for the same year as $83.6 million, including $3.0 million for vacation pay earned by substitutes. Both the State and City figures include salaries for substitutes for regular teachers on sabbatical leave.

as high as the rate for illnesses requiring a medical certificate.

-- Teacher discretionary absence rates are approximately 21 percent higher for Mondays and Fridays than for Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays.

In Title I elementary schools (Title I of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provides assistance to local educational agencies which meet specific criteria relating to students from low income families) discretionary absence rates are 29 percent higher than in Non-Title I elementary schools.

The last applicable Pupil Evaluation Program test scores showed a higher percentage of pupils performing below minimum competencies in Title I schools than in Non-Title I schools. This leads to the inference that where the educational need is greatest, teacher absenteeism is highest, especially discretionary absence.

Those elementary, intermediate and junior high schools with a higher percentage of teachers with more than five years service experienced higher absence rates from illness requiring medical certificates.

-- In Title I elementary, intermediate and junior high schools, about 60 percent of the teachers have five or more years experience. In Non-Title I schools, almost 80 percent of the teachers have this level of experience.

-- Medical certificate absence rates for Non-Title I

elementary, intermediate and junior high schools are about 50 percent higher than for Title I schools.

This raises two corollary questions which are not examined in this initial report: (1) the possible relationship between teacher seniority and medical certificate absence rates; and (2) the apparent assignment of teachers with the least experience to schools which appear to have the greatest educational needs.

Despite the high cost of hiring substitute teachers and general agreement that they are ineffective, New York City continues their general use.

-- New York City substitute teacher costs, $71.5 million in 1971-72, accounted for almost 9 percent of the City's total expenditures for teachers' salaries. Upstate substitute teacher costs, $36.1 million, accounted for only 2 1/2 percent of the total expenditures for teachers' salaries.

-- A study of about 18,000 teachers by the Metropolitan School Study Council showed that not only were substitute teachers significantly less effective than regular teachers and specialists, but they were also less effective than student teachers.

Recommendations

-- The City School District should take the following administrative actions to reduce teacher absenteeism rates:

  - assign the responsibility for improving teacher attendance to a specific top official of the

City School District of the City of New York and to his counterparts in each school district. Hold them strictly accountable for performance;

- insist on increased attention to improved teacher attendance by all district superintendents and principals;
- distribute comparative teacher attendance data among all schools to highlight excessive absenteeism in specific schools;
- consider excessive absenteeism as a factor in rating teachers and granting tenure;
- schedule faculty meetings, conferences and other important meetings on Mondays and Fridays to counteract high teacher absence on these days;
- maintain accurate cost data on substitute teacher salaries;
- eliminate the current 30-day grace period given teachers before they are required to indicate how an absence should be charged, in order to expedite the preparation of teacher absence reports.

-- The City Board of Education, in conjunction with the United Federation of Teachers, should develop group incentives which allow teachers and students to benefit from cost savings resulting from improved attendance.

-- The State Education Department and the City School District should institute budgetary action to financially penalize school districts with excessive expenditures for substitute teachers.

-- The City School District should develop alternatives to hiring substitute teachers:

- schedule the use of community resources to provide broadly gauged educational services;
- develop a program to use high school honor students to teach younger children; and
- make greater use of educational television and films.

-- The State Education Department should take aggressive action to adopt the recommendations of the Fleischmann Commission and the Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review to establish "programs where students teach other students"* and to plan "the comprehensive utilization of the state's multimillion dollar investment in classroom and public television."**

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* New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, Volume 3, 13.45

** Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review, "Educational Television in New York State", July 1973.

BACKGROUND

The 1973-74 teacher work year in New York City spans ten months. Within the school year, there are 24 holidays and 184 instruction days (183 instruction days in Brooklyn and Queens because of an additional special holiday observed in those Boroughs.)

Moreover, other leave with pay is permitted in the current contract with the United Federation of Teachers including:

-- Sabbatical Leave: Teachers on regular appointment are eligible, after each 14 years of service, for a one year sabbatical leave at 70 percent salary;

-- Sabbatical Leave for Restoration of Health: Teachers, after seven years of service, are eligible with the approval of the school medical director, for a six month leave at 60 percent of salary;

-- Sick Leave: Teachers are granted ten sick leave days a year which require no medical certification. Three of these days may be used for personal business. Sick leave absences in excess of the ten days require medical certification.

In addition, the Office of Personnel of the City School District of the City of New York defines other teacher leave days as "Non-Attendance".* Most non-attendance leave is approved by the school principal. Exhibit 1 on the next page lists the types of non-attendance days granted. Except as noted in the Exhibit, non-attendance is granted with pay.

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* The City School District of the City of New York, Office of Personnel, Personnel Memorandum No. 1, September 1973.

Exhibit 1

PURPOSES FOR WHICH NON-ATTENDANCE
LEAVE MAY BE GRANTED*

Purposes	Maximum Leave Granted
Jury duty qualification	3 hours
Jury duty	not specified
Official business in answer to a subpoena	not specified
Death in the immediate family	3 days
Death of relative outside the immediate family	1 day
Funeral of an associate	1 day
Attendance at graduation exercises	3 days
Extraordinary transportation delay	2 days
Legislative hearing attendance	not specified
Ordered military duty	30 days
Quarantine	for period covered by certificate
Religious observance (without pay)	not specified
Absence due to compliance with a requirement or directive of the school system	not specified
School visits and meetings within New York City	3 days
School meetings or conventions outside New York City	not specified
Attendance at a summer institute	2 weeks

* Extracted from Personnel Memorandum No. 1, the City School District of the City of New York, Office of Personnel, September 1973.

FINDINGS

ABSENCE APPROVAL AND REPORTING

Each teacher has 30 days beyond the termination of absence to certify his absence and designate the category under which it should be recorded. School principals have the power to grant or deny approval of teacher absence due to illness for periods of 20 consecutive days or less. Evaluation by a school medical officer is required for absences in excess of 20 consecutive school days.

The Board of Education requires two distinct types of reports dealing with teacher absence which are sent to different administrative units. An annual report (New York City Form OP 152) prepared by each school and submitted to the Office of Personnel includes the absence and tardiness record of each teacher by number of instances and total time lost. This form does not discriminate between absences covered by medical certificates, absences for self-treated illness and non-attendance.

Each school also sends monthly reports of teacher absence by category (New York City Form SD 1026) to the Bureau of Educational Program Research and Statistics. This form does not identify individual teachers, report lateness, or accumulate the number of times teachers have been absent. Thus the data on OP 152 and SD 1026 are not compatible.

The annual report, (OP 152) designates the principal's general performance rating of each teacher. Teachers may be rated:

-- S: satisfactory;

-- U: unsatisfactory, or

-- D: doubtful (for teachers on probationary tenure).

In the 1971-72 school year, only 276 teachers out of almost 58,000 (approximately 0.5 percent) in the City School District were rated unsatisfactory. A review of selected year end reports (OP 152) shows no consistent relationship between a teacher's absence rate and his general performance rating.

Reports of teacher absence, prepared centrally on a monthly basis by the Bureau of Educational Program Research and Statistics, are sent to the community school districts, but not to the academic or vocational high schools. Extracts from the reports are not sent on a regular basis to the school district component elementary, intermediate and junior high schools, nor do the schools know how their teacher absence rates compare with other schools.

TEACHER ABSENCE RATES*

There are two general categories of teacher absenteeism in New York City: discretionary and medical certificate. Dis-

*Absence rates are calculated by dividing the number of absent teacher man-days by the total available teacher instruction man-days, and are expressed as a percentage.

cretionary absences include absences for self treated illness, personal business and "non-attendance" days (see Exhibit 1). Medical certificate absences include those absences for which a teacher provides medical certification to explain his absence.

Absenteeism varies greatly throughout New York City by type of absence, level of school and school district. Discretionary absences generally account for two-thirds of all teacher absence and, for the 1972-73 school year, ranged from 3.3 percent to 4.8 percent, depending on the level of school. The total absence rate that year ranged from 5.1 percent to 6.4 percent. In the 1971-72 school year, the total absence rate, on a district-by-district basis, ranged from 5.6 percent to 8.2 percent (see Exhibit 2). Total absence and discretionary absence rates, for the last two full school years, are shown below.

New York City Teacher Absence Rates*
By Level

School Level	1971-72 Discretionary	1971-72 Total	1972-73 Discretionary	1972-73 Total
Elementary	4.8%	6.9%	4.5%	6.4%
Intermediate and Junior High School	4.8	6.2	4.8	6.0
Academic High School	3.7	5.4	3.6	5.1
Vocational High School	3.6	6.2	3.3	5.5
Deaf and Special Education Schools	4.4	6.5	4.2	5.8
Teenage Centers	3.7	4.6	4.0	5.5

* At this writing, preliminary 1973-74 teacher absentee data and complete breakdowns of 1972-73 teacher absentee data were not available.

Exhibit 2

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REVIEW

New York City Teacher Absence Rates
By District - 1971-72 School Year

District	Discretionary	Total
A	4.1	8.2
B	5.7	7.3
C	4.7	7.3
D	5.9	7.1
E	5.4	7.1
F	5.3	7.1
G	4.4	7.1
H	3.9	7.0
I	5.5	6.8
J	5.4	6.8
K	5.3	6.8
L	4.5	6.8
M	4.4	6.8
N	5.1	6.7
O	5.1	6.7
P	4.7	6.7
Q	4.5	6.7
R	5.3	6.6
S	5.0	6.6
T	4.9	6.6
U	4.9	6.6
V	4.4	6.6
W	4.1	6.6
X	5.0	6.5
Y	5.1	6.4
Z	4.9	6.3
AA	4.6	6.2
BB	3.8	6.2
CC	4.0	6.0
DD	4.3	5.9
EE	3.7	5.6

The most striking variation in teacher absence rates is among days of the week. Exhibit 3 on the following page shows absence rates by the day of the week. Teacher discretionary absence rates, on average, are 21 percent higher for Mondays and Fridays than for Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. The highest discretionary absence rate is for Monday (5.2 percent). The lowest rate is on Thursday (4.0 percent).

ABSENCE RATES IN TITLE I COMPARED WITH NON-TITLE I SCHOOLS

Title I of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provides assistance to local educational agencies which meet specific criteria relating to students from low income families. Schools receiving this assistance are known as Title I schools and are located in areas where there is a high concentration of low income families.

The last reported measures of reading and arithmetic competencies (Pupil Evaluation Program test scores) show a higher percentage of pupils performing below minimum competency in Title I schools than in Non-Title I schools.

The table on page 14 shows teacher absence rates, by level, for the 1972-73 school year in New York City. Teacher absence rates are calculated by dividing the number of absent teacher man-days by the total available teacher instruction man-days, and are expressed as percentages.

This data leads to the inference that, where the educational need is greatest, teacher absenteeism is highest. This is especially true of discretionary absence.

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Rate of Teacher Absence by Day of the Week
All New York City Schools--School Year 1971-72

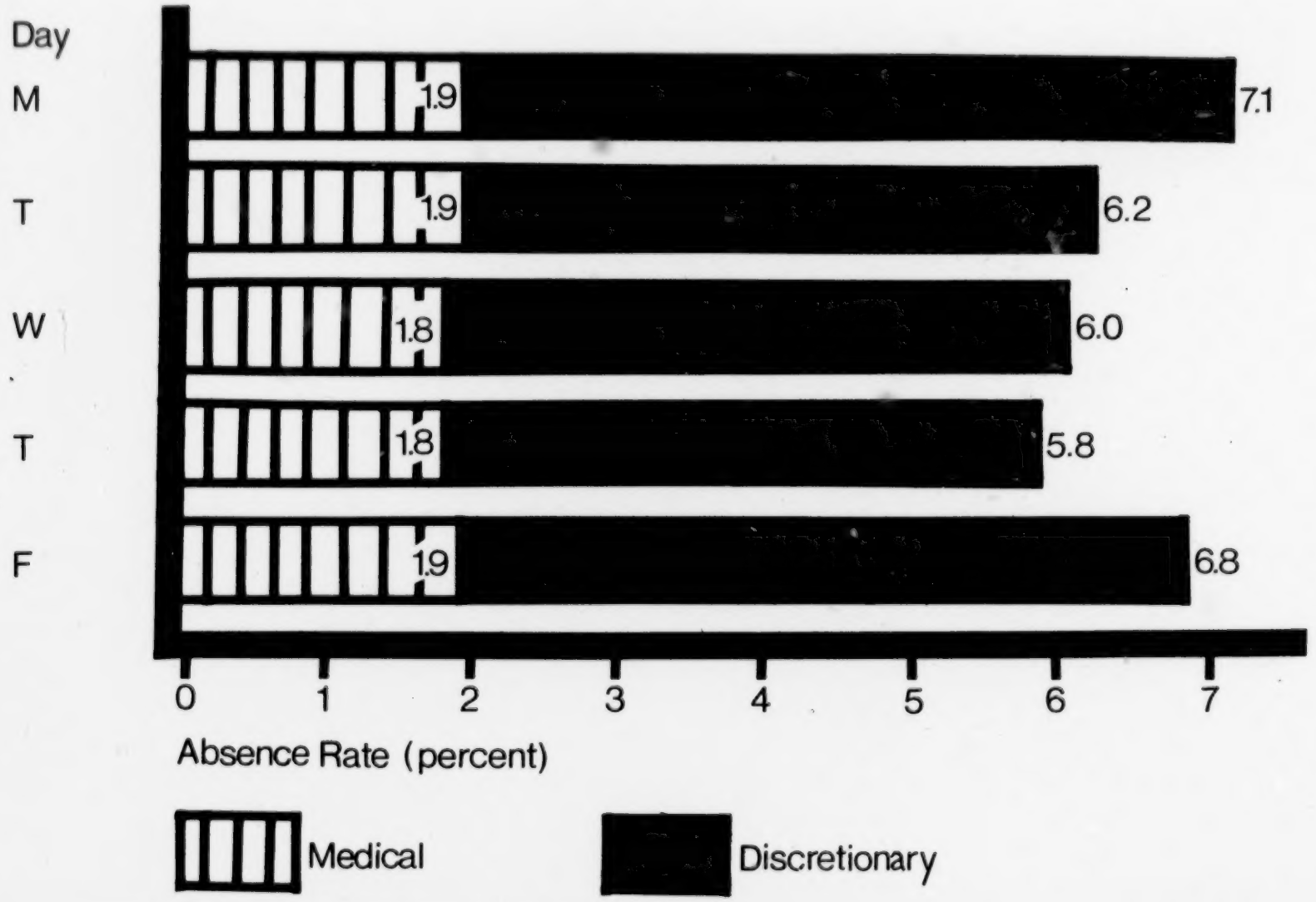

Exhibit 3

New York City Teacher Rate of Absence
1972-73 School Year-All Levels

School Level	Title I Discretionary	Title I Total	Non-Title I Discretionary	Non-Title I Total
Elementary	4.9%	6.5%	3.8%	6.1%
Intermediate and Junior High School	4.9	6.1	4.2	5.8
Academic High School	3.9	5.4	3.4	5.0
Vocational High School	3.4	5.6	3.2	5.4
Deaf and Special Education Schools	---	---	4.2	5.8
Teenage Centers	---	---	4.0	5.5

TEACHER ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

The ability of teachers to transfer from one school to another is defined in the current contract between the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of New York and the United Federation of Teachers, which states:

> "The Board and the Union recognize the need to maintain both staff stability and an equitable balance of experienced and inexperienced teachers in the schools. To meet this need, and to provide opportunities within this framework for teachers to transfer from one school to another, the Board and the Union agree that transfers shall be based on the following principles:
>
> a. A list of teachers seeking transfer, to be known as the transfer list, shall be established and maintained in each school. Regularly appointed teachers with at least five years of service on regular appointment in the school from which the transfer is sought shall be placed on the school's transfer list in order of seniority."

A survey of teacher assignments and absenteeism during the 1972-73 school year shows the following comparison of teachers'

seniority and medical certificate absence.

Comparison of Teachers' Experience
and Medical Certificate Absence Rates
By Level-New York City-1972-73 School Year

Type of School	Percentage of Teachers with 5 or more Years of Experience		Medical Certificate Absence Rate	
	Title I	Non-Title I	Title I	Non-Title I
Elementary	57.9%	78.3%	1.6%	2.3%
Intermediate and Junior High School	60.7	79.3	1.1	1.7
Academic High School	75.7	82.2	1.4	1.5
Vocational High School	88.7	90.9	2.2	2.1

As this table illustrates, at all levels, Title I schools have a greater proportion of teachers with less than five years experience than do similar Non-Title I schools. On average, the rate of medical certificate absence is 18.8 percent higher in Non-Title I schools than in Title I schools.

However, since discretionary absence rates average 19.4 percent greater in Title I schools compared with Non-Title I schools, total absence, on the average, is 5.4 percent greater in Title I schools than in Non-Title I schools.

This raises two questions which are not examined in this initial report: (1) the possible relationship between teacher seniority and medical certificate absence rates; and (2) the apparent assignment of teachers with the least experience to schools which appear to have the greatest educational needs.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

New York City reacts to the absence of a teacher in a number of different ways, including:

-- the use of a substitute teacher;

-- the assignment of another teacher from an administration or preparation period;

-- the spreading of the students in the class to other classes; or,

-- the assignment of an assistant principal or other non-teaching person to the class.

Substitute teachers used in the New York City schools fall within three categories:

-- Regular Substitute Teachers: Those teachers who still hold a "substitute teaching license", which is no longer issued;

-- Per Diem Substitute: Teachers who hold a regular teaching license, but who have not been appointed to a regular teaching position; and,

-- Temporary Per Diem Substitute: Persons who take an "emergency" examination, valid for one semester only, but who are not on the list of eligible teachers seeking appointment. These people must have a Bachelor of Arts degree and at least six hours of education courses.

Further, the New York City teachers' union contract states, "Teachers on maternity leave . . . shall be permitted to perform per diem teaching service."

There are no guidelines covering which category of substitute teachers should be hired. The decision on which teachers should be hired, and the number of times a particular substitute can be hired, rests with the district superintendent or the school principal, depending on the school district.

In the last few years, many groups and individuals have critically appraised the performance and effectiveness of substitute teachers. For example, the Cayuga County BOCES policy on teacher absence begins, "There is little research to indicate the effectiveness of substitute teachers . . . Conventional wisdom indicates that short term substitute teachers seldom provide service to students at a level superior to a teacher aide or teacher assistant."*

A 1971 Special Report of the Metropolitan School Study Council observed approximately 18,000 teachers and rated them for classroom effectiveness, by type. The Council's ratings are shown in the following table:

Mean Score of Observations
by Type of Teacher Ranked by Classroom Effectiveness

	Mean Score	
	Elementary	Secondary
Regular Teacher	6.12	5.01
Specialist	5.82	4.99
Student Teacher	3.62	2.76
Substitute	1.98	0.27

"Being near zero leads to the conclusion that just nothing much was going on . . ."**

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* Cayuga County BOCES, "Policy on Teacher Absence", 1972.

** Vincent, W. S., "Should School Districts Save Money on Substitutes?", IAR Research Bulletin, Columbia University, 1970.

"What clearly stands out on this table is the abysmal performance of substitute teachers in contrast to that of the regular classroom teacher . . . These low scores can only be interpreted as meaning that the substitute teachers in these classrooms function in the role more akin to that of a 'baby-sitter' rather than that of a professionally trained educator. Either substitute teacher performance must be improved or alternative less expensive methods of handling teacher absence should be initiated."*

Field interviews with administrators in New York City and upstate areas substantiate these research findings. One official remarked that "A substitute teacher is no substitute for the teacher."

As the chart notes, at the secondary level, not only were substitute teachers out-performed by regular teachers (0.27 to 5.01) and specialists, but were significantly bettered by student teachers as well (0.27 compared to 2.76).

COSTS OF ABSENTEEISM

Cost of substitute teaching is significantly higher in New York City than in the rest of the state. In the 1971-72 school year (the last year for which State Education Department

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* Olson, M. N., "Identifying Quality in School Classrooms: Some Problems and Some Answers", Metropolitan School Study Council Special Report, January 1971, Vol. 29, No. 5.

cost data is available), the total amount spent on substitute teacher salaries in New York City was $71.5 million.* The total spent for substitute teacher salaries for the rest of the state that year was $36.1 million.

Substitute teacher salaries, as a percentage of total teacher salaries for 1971-72, were 9 percent for New York City compared to 2 1/2 percent for the rest of the state.

New York City currently pays substitute teachers between $48 and $75.50 per day depending on their experience and educational background. The average daily salary for substitute teachers in New York City is $60.50.**

The rate of pay for substitute teachers in upstate areas is substantially lower, although it varies among school districts.

In addition to the high financial cost for substitute teachers, absenteeism may create a harmful interruption in the continuity of education, which may effect the child's learning process.

There is reason to believe that teacher absence may also set a model for student absence, a major problem in New York City schools. A recent New York City Board of Education memo-

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* Source: State Education Department, Bureau of Statistical Services. The City School District developed a total cost for substitute teachers, for the same year, of $83.6 million.

** Source: Office of Personnel, City School District of the City of New York.

randum on the subject of student absenteeism notes, "We should do more to publicize the value of good attendance. It is said in too many quarters that pupils need not attend school. Some students in high school feel that they have a constitutional and legitimate right to be truant since poor attendance is not regarded as a serious matter."*

There is no accurate cost data maintained centrally that reflects the cost of hiring substitute teachers in New York City. As noted, although the State Education Department reported expenditures for substitute teacher salaries, in the 1971-72 school year, as $71.5 million, the New York City Board of Education has reported the costs as $83.6 million, including $3.0 million for vacation pay which was earned by substitutes.

Both the State and City figures include salaries for substitutes for regular teachers on sabbatical leave.

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* Memorandum dated May 2, 1973 from the Assistant Superintendent, Office of High Schools, to the Chancellor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing incidence of teacher absence, the enormous financial resources involved and the use of generally ineffective substitute teachers all demand serious and prompt attention. This section discusses three general areas where action should be taken: (1) the improvement of teacher attendance, (2) the initiation of budgetary action to limit expenditures caused by teacher absenteeism, and (3) the development of alternatives to the hiring of substitute teachers.

Although the following proposals are directed to the problem of teacher absenteeism in New York City, observations of other school districts throughout the state suggest that the problem is not limited to New York City.

This Office plans to investigate selected other school districts throughout the state at a later date. However, school boards and administrators are urged to take prompt remedial action now, wherever the situation is appropriate and these proposals can be adapted to meet local needs.

IMPROVING TEACHER ATTENDANCE

Take Administrative Actions to Reduce Teacher Absence Rates

Strong administrative actions can, and do, substantially affect teacher attendance. Some school districts have drastically reduced teacher absenteeism through a variety of steps including the use of letters sent from the superintendent of schools to teachers with records of excessive absenteeism.

For those staff members who have not been granted tenure, one letter concludes, "We are pleased to have you as a member of our staff, but if next year your attendance does not improve significantly, we will not be able to recommend you for further advancement toward tenure."

We have already indicated a number of administrative conditions that affect teacher absenteeism in New York City, including the incompatibility of attendance reporting forms, the incomplete distribution of absence data to the schools, and the lack of central cost data on the hiring of substitute teachers.

Therefore, New York City should take the following administrative actions to reduce teacher absenteeism:

-- assign the responsibility for improving teacher attendance to a specific top official of the City School District of the City of New York and to his counterparts in each school district. Hold them strictly accountable for performance;

-- insist on increased attention to improving teacher attendance by all district superintendents and principals;

-- distribute comparative teacher attendance data among all schools to highlight excessive absenteeism in specific schools;

-- consider excessive absenteeism as a factor in rating teachers and granting tenure;

-- schedule faculty meetings, conferences and other important meetings on Mondays and Fridays, to counteract high teacher absence on these days;

-- maintain accurate cost data on substitute teacher salaries;

-- eliminate the current 30-day grace period given teachers before they are required to indicate how an absence should be charged, in order to expedite the preparation of teacher absence reports.

Develop Group Incentives which Allow Teachers to Benefit from Reduced Absenteeism

Develop a system that would give teacher organizations a voice in the way savings realized from the reduction of teacher absence would be used.

At present, because of budget limitations, a number of educational programs which may be desirable may not be funded or are funded at a low level. Under this proposal, teachers, in addition to being given a voice in what programs they want developed, would be given a realistic means of funding such programs.

For example, the 1971-72 cost of substitute teachers in

New York City was approximately $71 million. Implementation of this proposal would mean that, if this figure were reduced $40 million, teacher organizations would be given an opportunity to allocate a part of the savings to develop teacher centers, in-service education programs or other projects which would improve the quality of education. While the examples given here are illustrative, other possibilities should be explored by the Board of Education in cooperation with the United Federation of Teachers.

INSTITUTE BUDGETARY ACTION TO LIMIT EXPENDITURES CAUSED BY TEACHER ABSENTEEISM

The present cost of substitute teachers can be reduced through strong financial pressure at both the City and State level.

One very direct method of attacking the problem could involve a substantial reduction in next year's allocation for substitute teacher salaries, with adequate notice to all concerned parties. This action, on a City-wide and community school district level, would provide a strong stimulus to superintendents and principals to directly confront the problems caused by teacher absence. In addition, successful school districts that effectively control costs should have part of the resultant savings available for programs benefiting children.

On the State level, the State Education Department should develop a method of penalizing school districts with excessive expenditures for substitute teachers. For example, a system might be developed that would require school districts to report the number of days of substitute teacher instruction which, in turn, would be balanced against a maximum level established by the State. On the premise that students receiving substitute instruction were getting less education, no state aid would be granted for substitute teachers' salaries above an allowable maximum.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE HIRING OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

No matter how successful the actions taken to reduce teacher absenteeism, some teacher absence is inevitable. At present, teacher absence commonly results in the hiring of substitute teachers on a per diem basis. The following proposals are put forward as alternatives to that practice -- alternatives that will not only reduce current expenditures for substitute teachers but will also provide a valuable educational supplement to the normal curriculum.

Schedule Community Resources to Provide Instructional Services

One alternate to the use of per diem substitute teachers

is the use of community resource people on a preplanned basis. This would not only reduce current substitute teacher expenditures but would also provide a rich and varied instructional program for students.

The use of community volunteers, although not new, is very often restricted to one-to-one tutorial programs. This proposal, however, would make much greater use of community resource people, governmental officials, quasi-public personnel, and community volunteers. Rather than working with a single student at a time, each representative would give a prescheduled and preplanned presentation to classes with absent teachers. The presentation would not necessarily coincide with the subject material normally taught to the class. Identification and scheduling of the participants should be accomplished well in advance of the presentation date, and would be done on a school-by-school basis by principals.

One school district has, for the last three years, conducted a "Substitute Enrichment Program" along the lines discussed above. In addition to reducing the costs of substitute instruction more than 12 percent, they feel the program " . . . provides access to a veritably endless supply of cultural and educational

possibilities and . . . has provided a richness and variety of opportunity that has heretofore been unavailable."

A partial list of possible resource areas available to New York City schools would include (examples are illustrative only):

-- Governmental (International, Federal, State and City)

United Nations
Foreign consulates and trade offices
Police Department
Fire Department
Sanitation Department
Health, Education and Welfare agencies
Attorney General's Office
Transportation agencies
Environmental protection agencies
Parks Department
Commerce Department
Labor Department
Human Rights agencies
Public Works agencies
Housing agencies
Port of New York Authority

As examples, the United Nations could give presentations to students on the operation of the World Health Organization, the UNICEF program, the structure and goals of the United Nations as a whole, and its world-wide role in peacekeeping operations. The Police Department of the City of New York could, through community relations personnel, cover a wide range of topics: what to do in an emergency, how to defend yourself, the problems of drug abuse, a citizen's rights under the law, how to report a crime, parking and motor vehicle regulations, and many more. Environmental agencies, City, State, and Federal, could discuss air and water

pollution, the functioning of an ecosystem, recycling, energy conservation, and the plight of endangered species in the United States. Representatives from various level labor departments could outline employment trends and projections, and could act in a supportive role to school guidance personnel in discussing how to prepare for job interviews, answer help-wanted advertisements, and procedures for successfully seeking employemnt.

-- Local and National Health Organizations

Red Cross
American Cancer Society
United Hospital Fund
United Fund
Hospitals, clinics and nursing homes

Among examples in this area, health organizations could provide a wide range of presentations. For instance, the Red Cross could explain its role in a natural disaster, how to administer basic first aid, its blood bank program and the basic biology of blood, and its swimming instructor program. The American Cancer Society could alert students to the warning signs of cancer, the various types and causes of cancer, the state of cancer research, and the development of cures for cancer. Local hospital community relations personnel could describe how a hospital functions, the job opportunities in medicine and the changes in medical technology in recent years.

-- Community Service Organizations

League of Women Voters
Chamber of Commerce
Junior Achievement
Boys Club
YMCA, YWCA

As illustrations, the League of Women Voters could lead discussions on the principles and workings of American democracy, how to register to vote, and specific issues before the electorate. The Chamber of Commerce could present the scope and impact of tourism in New York City, the New York business community, cultural institutions available to New Yorkers, and the amusement, business and social resources available to residents. Junior Achievement could inform students of its operations and philosophy as well as particular projects undertaken by students in various parts of the country.

-- Educational and Philanthropic Foundations

Ford Foundation
Foundation for Research and Education of
Sickle Cell Diseases
Highway Safety Foundation

As examples, the Ford Foundation could discuss how it operates, its criteria for financial assistance, and the particular projects that it has aided. The Highway Safety Council could show films and lecture on recent safety advancements in automotive equipment and defensive driving techniques.

-- Trade and Industrial Associations and Labor Organizations

American Petroleum Institute
American Association of Advertising Agencies
Better Business Bureau

The range of presentations that could be given by groups under this heading is very broad. (It should be noted that the 1973 Manhattan "Yellow Pages" contains more than four pages of listings under the heading "Associations" and three pages of listings under the heading "Labor Organizations"). As examples, the American Petroleum Institute could explore with students the energy crisis, basic geology, seismographic techniques, how crude oil is refined, what products come from petroleum, how oil is transported, safety devices on new supertankers, the oil depletion allowance and import quotas, the ecology of Alaska, and the status of the development of alternate energy sources such as geothermal and nuclear energy. The American Association of Advertising Agencies could give presentations on how an advertising agency works, the history of advertising in the United States, and the role of advertising in the economy. The Better Business Bureau could tell students about its role in society and how consumers can combat consumer fraud.

-- Private Business

Banking
Insurance
Retail Sales
Import-Export
Manufacturing

Communications
Fashion
Food
Energy
Transportation
Stock Market
Sports and Leisure

Various segments of private industry could, through existing public relations departments and speakers bureaus, provide presentations to schools about their own company or their industry. For example, the New York Stock Exchange could explain the history of public ownership of companies in the United States, how stocks are issued, the various types of stocks issued, how shares are bought and sold, the relationship of the stock market to the general economy, and the regulations that govern the transfer of stock and protect the shareholder. Members of the communications industry could describe how a newspaper is produced, what goes on behind the scenes in producing a television show, and provide general background information on any of the issues of the day. Professional athletes could talk with students about the basic rules of their sport, or discuss in detail any particular game or season. Representatives of the transportation industry system could outline the logistics of operating a transportation system, the job opportunities available, the history of railroading, or the airplane, or any of a number of other topics.

-- Cultural Institutions

Theaters
Museums
Colleges and Universities
Art Galleries
Foreign and Domestic Cultural Societies

Representatives from museums and galleries could discuss great artists or art movements, and members of theater groups could lead discussion analyzing plays or exploring the intricacies of producing a show. As an illustration, the Museum of Natural History could provide stimulating programs on the comet Kahoutek, the evolution of man, the history of the American Indian, or any of literally hundreds of other topics. The Museum of Modern Art could give illustrated lectures on the life and works of Pablo Picasso, the history of the poster, photography as an art form, the Bauhaus, and so on.

-- Clubs

Bridge Clubs
Chess Clubs
Sales Executives Clubs
School Clubs

As in the other categories, representatives from various clubs could provide information about their particular area of interest. Representatives from a chess club could demonstrate the basics of the game, or particular chess matches. Representatives of the Sales Executives Club could provide

information on the role of sales in the economy, the existing and potential job opportunities in sales in New York, and the techniques of selling.

-- Retired business executives and military personnel

Members of this group could give presentations about their individual experiences, either in business or in their travels. The range of presentations is as wide as the number of resource people available.

All of these categories and the organizations listed are only illustrative. There are literally tens of thousands of associations, businesses, cultural groups, and individuals who are potential and willing resources for this type of program. Each school principal can, and should, develop and schedule a series of presentations geared to the students in his school.

As an indication of the availability of resources, the Public Education Association, in its "Fall 1973 Guide to Business Resources for New York Schools", lists over 100 firms and agencies which can supply speakers to schools. The booklet notes, "The list . . . represents only a sample."*

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* Public Education Association, 1973.

Develop a Program to Use
Honor Students to Substitute for Absent Teachers

The formation of an Honor Committee of High School Students, who could serve as short-term alternatives to substitute teachers, on a school-by-school basis, would directly provide an answer to substitute instruction for occasional teacher absence as well as provide cross-age peer teaching, a proven and effective method of instruction.

The Honor Committee would be formed from students in their last two years of formal public education. An administrator in each school would work with the committee to assist them in the development of programs and scheduling. Members of the Committee would serve as classroom teachers when regular teachers were absent. Where necessary, school supervision could be provided by having non-teaching professionals give a percentage of their time to provide, throughout the day, periodic adult coverage of the classes.

Since the early 1960's, educators have investigated the concept of using pupils to tutor other pupils. Tutorial programs show that "a growth in mutual respect and understanding develop from the effort to help one another."*

Further, in 1971, Gartner concluded, "It has long been obvious that children learn from their peers, but a more

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* "Today's Education", Vol. 58, No. 7, October 1969.

significant observation is that children learn more from teaching other children."*

One of the first groups to work in the area of cross-age tutoring were the Lippitts at the University of Michigan.** Their study used junior and senior high school students to assist elementary pupils in reading, writing and spelling. They found that, while the elementary children made significant progress in performance and attention span, the older students gained too, in terms of attitudes, interest in school, and ability to work with other children.

Regarding the use of students as teachers in other than tutorial capacities, the Fleischmann Commission noted, " . . . effective teaching is now being performed in the public schools of New York State by students who are themselves engaged in projects variously called cross-age teaching, youth teaching youth, and so forth. Younger students appear to enjoy being taught by persons who are only slightly older than themselves, and students engaged in teaching seem to learn more than students who are not. Therefore, we propose that the State Education Department encourage staff in all schools in New York State to establish programs where students teach other students."***

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* Gartner, A., et. al., "Children Teach Children", N.Y. Harper and Row, 1971.

** Lippitt, P., et. al., CHILDREN, "Cross-Age Relationships --An Educational Resource", 1965.

*** New York State Commission on the Quality, Cost and Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education, Volume 3, 13.45.

Use Educational Television,
Cable Television and Films

Through the use of selected live and recorded television programming, and the use of films, costs for substitute instruction can be reduced.

The use of educational and cable television would provide students faced with teacher absence with opportunities to view live television broadcasts or video tapes, all selected because of their educational value. Students could view news commentaries or other existing programming geared to a particular age group.

A recent report of the Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review on Educational Television in New York State concluded that students can benefit, in the absence of a teacher, by a creative and systematic application of educational television as a medium of instruction. In summarizing its 1973 study, the Commission said, "Today, the state's ETV systems and facilities are a valuable and extensive educational and cultural asset, but one that is not utilized to its expected potential."*

In concluding, the Commission noted: "The Board of Regents has not evaluated, defined and planned the comprehensive utilization of the state's multimillion dollar

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* Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review, "Educational Television in New York State", July 1973.

investment in classroom and public television. PTV stations, schools and BOCES, the Education Department and the State University operate as uncoordinated entities. If this fragmented approach continues, it is difficult to ascertain how both the technological opportunities and the state's classroom and cultural production needs can be effectively or efficiently met."*

A 1973 survey of audio-visual equipment in New York City schools shows that over 3,400 television receivers and 195 portable video tape recorders are currently available for use.**

Similarly, the use of films can provide alternate instruction and reduce the need for traditional substitute teachers.

Documentaries, nature studies and selected governmental and industrial films are among the many types suitable for use in the schools. Both television and film instruction are ideally suited for use with large groups of students, as would result from the absence of more than one teacher on the same day.

The foregoing are but a few examples of how community resources and other programs could be used to provide alternatives to the hiring of substitute teachers.

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* ibid.

** Board of Education of the City of New York, Office of Educational Planning and Support, "Profile of Audio-Visual Equipment in New York City Public Schools", 1973.

In its position paper, "Culture and Education", issued in January, 1973, the Board of Regents said, "More and more cultural institutions are showing their willingness to share the burden of formal education . . . It not only makes educational sense for schools and cultural institutions to share their resources, the economics of the situation makes joint action imperative."

Some schools are already using programs comparable to the ones described here as enrichments to the in-school curriculum and to reduce the isolation of the classroom from the community. For example, the Bank Street College of Education has worked with public schools to develop teams to work with community organizations in developing in-school programs.

CONCLUSION

Teacher absenteeism in New York City appears to be higher on Mondays and Fridays than on other weekdays; in Title I schools, where the educational need seems greatest, the absence rate is higher than in Non-Title I schools. Further, present policies often lead to the use of generally ineffective substitute teachers. This practice costs tens of millions of dollars yearly which could otherwise be used to improve the education of our children.

The proposals in this report for improving teacher attendance, reducing expenditures for the use of substitute teachers, and for developing alternatives to hiring substitute teachers are illustrative of steps that can, and should be taken by the State Education Department and the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of New York. Although this report deals with issues in New York City only, school districts throughout the State are urged to take prompt remedial action wherever the situation is appropriate and these proposals can be adapted to meet local needs.

In general, these proposals can be implemented under existing laws. If any adaptations of these proposals can be facilitated through legislation, the State Education Department should promptly take the initiative in submitting appropriate bills.